

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NDJAME 01697 211320Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----211353Z 123358 /42
R 211255Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4099

C O N F I D E N T I A L NDJAMENA 1697

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, CD
SUBJ: MEETING WITH PRESIDENT MALLOUM

1. I HAD TWO-HOUR REVIEW OF MY RECENT VISIT TO WASHINGTON AND THE ABIDJAN CHIEFS OF MISSION CONFERENCE WITH PRESIDENT AMLLOUM THIS MORNING. PRESIDENT WAS IN HIGHLY EMOTIONAL STATE AND OBVIOUSLY DISTRAUGHT BY MILITARY SITUATION IN EASTERN CHAD (SEE N'DJAMENA 1652).

2. PINFORMED THE PRESIDENT THAT IN WASHINGTON, AS HE HAD REQUESTED, I TOOK UP THREE ITEMS: THE NATURE OF OUR AID PROGRAM; THE PROGRESS OF THE MINI-REFINERY; AND AN INCREASE IN US RECOGNITION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF CHAD. I SUMMARIZED THESE CONVERSATIONS (SEE SEPARATE TELEGRAMS WHICH FOLLOW) AND STATED THAT I HOPED HE WOULD BE PLEASED WITH THE RESULTS. I WENT ON TO SUMMARIZE THE RESULTS OF THE ABIDJAN CONFERENCE IN REGARD TO US POLICY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AND IN THE NORTH/SOUTH ECONOMIC CONFRONTATION.

3. IN RESPONSE, THE PRESIDENT STATED FORCEFULLY THAT WHILE HE APPRECIATED WHAT WE WERE TRYING TO DO TO BE OF ASSISTANCE TO CHAD, HE WAS AFRAID IT WOULD BE TOO LITTLE TOO LATE. HE SAID THAT, LIKE OUR POLICY IN SOUTH AFRICA, WE WERE GOING TO AWAKE TO THE SITUATION IN CENTRAL AFRICA TOO LATE. IN REFERRING TO THE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 NDJAME 01697 211320Z

APRIL 1 ATTEMPTED COUP, HE IMPLIED THAT QUOTE OUTSIDE END QUOTE FORCES WERE BEHIND THE ATTEMPT AND THAT ALTHOUGH THEY HAD FAILED, EVENTUALLY THEY WOULD PROBABLY SUCCEED IN KILLING HIM AND AT THAT POINT

THE US POSITION IN CHAD, INCLUDING THE US OIL COMPANIES, WOULD BE ENDED.

4. HE MADE A STRONG PLEA FOR US MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO WHICH I RESPONDED BY OUTLINING PRESIDENT CARTER'S NEW ARMS SALE POLICY. I ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT I UNDERSTOOD AMBASSADOR GABA HAD RAISED THE QUESTION DIRECTLY WITH PRESIDENT CARTER AND THAT THE LATTER HAD ASKED HIM TO PUT IN WRITING FOR DELIVERY TO DR. BRZEWSKI. I SUGGESTED WE HOLD THE QUESTION IN ABEYANCE UNTIL THIS HAD BEEN DONE.

5. ON THE QUESTION OF US ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS IN CHAD, HE FELT OUR NEW APPROACH WAS IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION BUT DID NOT GO FAR ENOUGH IN CONCENTRATING OUR EFFORT. HE STATED THAT HE WOULD PREFER WE CONCENTRATE OUR ENTIRE EFFORT IN ONE SMALL REGION OF CHAD AND ONE ROAD TO THAT REGION. HE SUGGESTED THE PROVINCE OF LAC AND A ROAD FROM MASSAGUET TO BOL. I POINTED OUT WE WERE ALREADY HEAVILY COMMITTED TO MANY OTHER PROJECTS AND THAT WE HAD EXPRESSED OUR INTEREST IN ENTERING INTO LAC IN THE SODELAC PROJECT. HE ANSWERED IN UNEQUIVOCAL TERMS THAT HE WOULD PREFER WE DROP ALL OTHER AID PROJECTS IN CHAD TO CONCENTRATE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE GREAT POTENTIAL IN THE PROVINCE OF LAC AND A ROAD TO THAT AREA.

6. HE AGAIN REQUESTED MORE HIGH-LEVEL INTERLUDE IN CHAD AND SPECIFICALLY INVITED AMBASSADOR YOUNG TO STOP IN NDJAMENA ON HIS WAY OUT OF AFRICA. WITHOUT IN ANY WAY ENCOURAGING THE PRESIDENT, I HAVE REPEATED THIS INVITATION TO AMBASSADOR YOUNG BY SEPARATE TELEGRAM.

7. PRESIDENT ALSO MENTIONED IN PASSING THAT HE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND WHY A GREAT COUNTRY LIKE U.S. HAD NOT RESPONDED
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 NDJAME 01697 211320Z

POSITIVELY TO HIS REQUEST FOR HILANES TO DISTRIBUTE FOOD RELIEF.

8. I INTEND TO MAKE PARALLEL APPROACH TO FOREIGN MINISTER KAMOUQUE WITH THE RESULTS OF MY WASHINGTON TALKS AND THE ABIDJAN MEETING NEXT WEEK. I SUGGEST WE TAKE NO DEFINITIVE ACTION UNTIL AFTER THIS MEETING. PRESIDENT MALLOUM'S STATE WAS SO EMOTIONAL, HE MIGHT WELL WISH TO RECONSIDER SOME OF THE POSITIONS HE TOOK DURING OUR MEETING. BRADFORD

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, POLITICAL SITUATION, FOREIGN ASSISTANCE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 21-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977NDJAME01697
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770181-1319
Format: TEL
From: NDJAMENA
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770532/aaaabbfm.tel
Line Count: 105
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 49ecc58c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29-Dec-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2423265
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MEETING WITH PRESIDENT MALLOUM
TAGS: PFOR, PDIP, CD, (MALLOUM, FELIX), (BRADFORD, WILLIAM G)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/49ecc58c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009